

Gun safety activists decry inaction as U.S. shootings surge

By STEVE PEOPLES

AP National Politics Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Democrats have spent years pledging to address the gun violence that plagues communities across the U.S. But a surge of mass shootings over the weekend that left dozens wounded and two dead served as a reminder of how little they have accomplished since taking control of Washington 15 months ago.

The struggle for the Biden administration and Democrats in Congress to enact any meaningful legislation to enhance gun safety reflects how the party's ambitious agenda has been frustratingly stunted by internal squabbling, the persistence of the pandemic and the war in Ukraine. The almost complete Republican opposition to Democratic priorities, including gun rules, has hobbled a party with razor-thin majorities in the House and Senate. But that's little solace to gun safety advocates and tens of thousands of shooting victims who were told Democrats would reduce gun violence if given the chance to govern. In an already difficult election year, the inaction threatens to further undermine the coalition of young people, women, voters of color and independents who helped deliver Joe Biden the presidency in 2020 and will be needed again if Democrats are to hold control of Congress.



Rep. Lucy McBath, D-Ga., questions Attorney General Merrick Garland during a hearing Oct. 21, 2021, on Capitol Hill in Washington.

Associated Press

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Gun safety activists decry inaction as U.S. shootings surge



Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., emerges from the chamber to cheer the vote confirming Supreme Court nominee Ketanji Brown Jackson, securing her place as the first Black woman on the high court, at the Capitol in Washington, April 7, 2022.

Associated Press

Continued from Front

"I'm just angry," said David Hogg, a gun safety activist who survived the 2018 shooting that killed 17 people at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. "We took the House and then

we took the Senate and now we have the White House, too, and still, nothing is changing."

Rep. Lucy McBath, D-Ga., whose son was shot to death nearly a decade ago, encouraged those frustrated with the pace of progress to be patient. She

likened the fight to reduce gun violence to her parents' fight for civil rights a generation earlier.

"Change doesn't come as quickly as we ever want it to happen. Because understand, this is a culture that we're having to change," McBath said in

an interview. "I know that we're making real progress on this issue. The fact that I am actually in Washington, and I was elected in Georgia with a gun violence policy agenda ... tells you there is progress."

Yet McBath's return to Congress next year is far from assured. She's locked in a competitive primary against Rep. Carolyn Bourdeaux in a redrawn district in Atlanta's northeast suburbs.

Meanwhile, White House aides insist that Biden is doing all he can to keep the issue of gun violence front and center.

Just last week, the Democratic president signed an executive order to crack down on untraceable "ghost guns." He also devoted part of his first State of the Union speech to gun violence and called for major increases in police funding in his 2023 budget proposal.

But some of those same progressives who cheered the president's efforts insist he and his party are not doing enough.

"It's appalling, it's horrifying, it's so very sad and embarrassing that this is just continuing and getting worse," said Mark Barden, whose 7-year-old son, Daniel, was among 26 students and educators killed in a shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in 2012. Barden now serves as co-founder and CEO of Sandy Hook Promise Action Fund, one of the gun violence prevention groups that emerged over the last decade to help counter the gun lobby's influence on policy and politics.

"Congress needs to step up and get to work," Barden said, noting that this December marks the 10th anniversary of his first-grade son's murder.

Democrats' frustration around gun violence prevention is not new.

After the Sandy Hook shooting, President Barack Obama tried and failed to convince Congress to enact popular gun safety measures like universal background checks and

an assault weapon ban. There's little sign now that the Democrats who control Congress will send gun safety measures to Biden's desk anytime soon.

The House passed legislation last year to expand background checks to include private and online sales, including at gun shows. But Senate Democratic leaders haven't yet scheduled their version of the legislation for a vote. And facing near-unanimous GOP opposition, Democrats would need support from at least 10 Republicans in a 50-50 Senate to overcome any filibuster.

Sen. Chris Murphy, D-Conn., tried to bring the background check bill up for a Senate vote in December, but that effort failed when Republicans objected.

Democratic Sen. Joe Manchin of West Virginia also opposes the House bill.

Asked whether Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer would bring gun safety legislation up for a vote, an aide pointed to comments the New York Democrat made in February.

"Sen. Murphy had been trying to work with Republicans to get 60 votes. He hasn't given up on those efforts, although they've not gotten that far. But we're going to keep pursuing background checks. I believe in that very, very strongly," Schumer said at the time.

In the meantime, more Americans are dying from gun-related injuries than ever before.

In 2020, the most recent year for which federal data is available, 19,384 people were killed in gun homicides — a 35% increase from the previous year and the largest one-year increase in gun homicides on record.

Republicans have overwhelmingly opposed gun control measures, casting any tightening of current law as a threat to the constitutionally protected right to bear arms. The GOP has instead called for stronger policing and more gun ownership to combat the crime surge. □

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Biden restores stricter environmental review of big projects

By MATTHEW DALY

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Biden administration is restoring federal regulations that require rigorous environmental review of major infrastructure projects such as highways, pipelines and oil wells — including likely impacts on climate change and nearby communities. The longstanding reviews were scaled back by the Trump administration in a bid to fast-track projects and create jobs.

A rule finalized Tuesday will restore key provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act, a bedrock environmental law designed to ensure community safeguards during reviews for a wide range of federal proposals, including roads, bridges and energy projects authorized in the \$1 trillion infrastructure law Biden signed last fall, the White House said.

The White House Council on Environmental Quality said the new rule, which takes effect in late May, should resolve challenges created by the Trump-era policy and restore public confidence during environmental reviews.

"Restoring these basic community safeguards will provide regulatory certainty, reduce conflict and help ensure that projects get built right the first time," said CEQ Chair Brenda Mallory. "Patching these holes in the environmental review process will help projects get built faster, be more resilient and provide greater benefits to people who live nearby."

Former President Donald Trump overhauled the environmental reviews in 2020 in a bid to accelerate projects he said would boost the economy and provide jobs.

Trump made slashing government regulations a hallmark of his presidency. He and his administration frequently expressed frustration at rules they said unnecessarily slowed approval for interstate oil and gas pipelines and other big projects. The rule change imposed in 2020 restricted



Pipeline used to carry crude oil is shown at the Superior, Wis., terminal of Enbridge Energy, June 29, 2018.

Associated Press

the timelines for environmental reviews and public comment and allowed federal officials to disregard a project's role in cumulative effects, such as climate change.

The new rule comes as the Supreme Court reinstated a separate Trump-era rule that curtails the power of states and Native American tribes to block pipelines and other energy projects that can pollute rivers, streams and other waterways.

In a decision that split the court 5-4 earlier this month, the justices agreed to halt a lower court judge's order throwing out the Trump rule. The decision does not interfere with the Biden administration's plan to rewrite the Environmental Protection Agency rule. Work on a revision has begun, but the administration has said a final rule is not expected until next spring. The Trump-era rule will remain in effect in the meantime.

Contrary to frequent assertions by Trump and others in his administration, Mallory said a more rigorous environmental review will actually speed up completion of major projects, since they will be more likely to withstand a legal challenge by environmental groups or states. Many Trump-era environmental decisions were reversed or delayed by courts after findings they did not undergo sufficient analysis.

Environmental groups hailed the rule change, which they said restores

bedrock environmental protections under NEPA, a 1970 law that requires the government to accept public comments and take environmental, economic

and health impacts into consideration before approving any major project. "NEPA plays a critical role in keeping our communities and our environment healthy and safe, and Donald Trump's attempts to weaken NEPA were clearly nothing more than a handout to corporate polluters," said Leslie Fields, the Sierra Club's national director of policy, advocacy and legal affairs.

Environmental groups and African American, Latino and tribal activists had protested the Trump-era rule change, saying it would worsen pollution in areas already reeling from oil refineries, chemical plants and other hazardous sites. The Biden administration has made addressing such

environmental justice issues a key priority.

"Communities of color, especially, have relied on NEPA to make sure their voices are heard in decisions that have a profound impact on their health and their well-being," said Rosalie Winn, a senior attorney for the Environmental Defense Fund, which challenged the Trump-era rule. The White House action "re-establishes essential NEPA safeguards and ensures they will continue to protect people and communities today and in future generations," she said.

Business groups and Republican lawmakers criticized the rule change, saying it would slow down major infrastructure developments. □



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Florida Gov DeSantis pushes to end Disney self-government

By ANTHONY IZAGUIRRE

Associated Press

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (AP) — Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis on Tuesday asked the Legislature to repeal a law allowing Walt Disney World to operate a private government over its properties in the state, the latest volley in a feud between the governor and the entertainment giant over what critics have dubbed the "Don't Say Gay" law.

DeSantis, an ascendant GOP governor and potential 2024 presidential candidate, has battled with Disney over the company's opposition to a new law barring instruction on sexual orientation and gender identity in kindergarten through third grade.

On Tuesday, DeSantis raised the stakes.

As lawmakers returned to the Capitol for a special legislative session on congressional redistricting, the governor issued a proclamation that allows the GOP-controlled statehouse to take up bills eliminating Disney's self-governing district. Republicans quickly filed proposals to do so.

"I am announcing today that we are expanding the call of what they are going to be considering this week. And so, yes they will be considering the congressional map, but they also will be considering termination of all special districts that



Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis addresses a joint session of a legislative session, Jan. 11, 2022, in Tallahassee, Fla.

Associated Press

were enacted in Florida prior to 1968, and that includes the Reedy Creek Improvement District," DeSantis said at a news conference, referencing the company's governing district without mentioning Disney by name. He did not elaborate.

Disney representatives did not return an emailed request for comment on Tuesday. It was not immediately clear how the elimination of the district would affect the company or neighboring governments.

The Reedy Creek Improvement District is a private government controlled by Disney World and set up by

the state Legislature in 1967 that allows it to provide government services such as zoning, fire protection, utilities and infrastructure. The creation of the district, and the control it gave Disney over 27,000 acres (11,000 hectares) in Florida, was a crucial element in the company's plans to build near Orlando in the 1960s. Company officials said they needed autonomy to plan a futuristic city along with the theme park. The city never materialized, however; instead, it morphed into the EPCOT theme park.

The push to punish the company comes after Disney

announced it would suspend political donations in the state over the new Parental Rights in Education law. Opponents dubbed the law "Don't Say Gay," arguing that barring lessons on sexual orientation and gender identity in early grades would marginalize LGBTQ people. Disney is one of Florida's biggest private employers: Last year, the company said it had more than 60,000 workers. LGBTQ advocates who work for the company criticized CEO Bob Chapek for what they said was his slow response speaking out against the bill. Some walked off the

job in protest.

DeSantis has repeatedly lashed out at Disney and critics of the law, gaining considerable attention in conservative media spheres. He insists the policy is reasonable and says parents, not teachers, should broach subjects of sexual orientation and gender identity with children.

Republican lawmakers appear receptive to punishing Disney, filing proposals that would dissolve the district by June 2023. DeSantis has been a powerful governor, effectively pushing his priorities in the statehouse, and both the GOP Senate president and House speaker support him on the Disney issue.

Democrats were quick to criticize the governor's move as retribution for the company's stance on the education bill. Some pointed out that Disney has been a major economic driver in the state.

Retired Rollins College political scientist Richard Foglesong, whose book, "Married to the Mouse" recounts the formation of Reedy Creek, said he thought initially that "cooler heads would prevail" in the war of words between DeSantis and Disney.

"I believe I was wrong. I overestimated — or underestimated — Gov. DeSantis," Foglesong said. "I see it as a legitimate threat." □



Druid Hills High School is shown in this undated photo, in suburban Atlanta. On Monday, April 18, 2022, the DeKalb County School Board is expected to consider renovations for the high school after a video documentary by students highlighted issues with the crumbling school.

By JEFF MARTIN
Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Despite a

student-produced video showing gaping holes in ceilings, crumbling bath-

Major remake of school nixed after students filmed disrepair

rooms and signs warning of possible electrical shock around utilities in one room, a metro Atlanta school board has decided not to put Druid Hills High School in line for a major modernization project.

Instead, the DeKalb County Board of Education voted 5-2 this week to change its plan for repairs of schools districtwide. Druid Hills High had been on a list of schools set for major overhauls until it was removed earlier this year. The decision sparked anger among parents and led to students

creating the documentary video that has drawn more than 44,000 views on YouTube.

In the eight-minute video, students used iPhones to document plaster falling off walls, water leaking in many areas and a ceiling hole so big a student is shown placing his entire hand through it. The students also describe the smell of human waste in a lunch area of the school, which has century-old water pipes.

The school board's decision not to put Druid Hills back

on the list was "incredibly disappointing" and "unconscionable," said board member Marshall Orson, who represents neighborhoods near the school and has pushed for the major renovations since dropped from the plans.

"It was sad that a majority of the board is willing to consign the students to a facility that is in just deplorable conditions," Orson said. "This would not be acceptable anywhere. The notion that this is acceptable at one of our schools is incomprehensible." □

Spain: Hacked Catalans to launch a legal bid on spyware use

By ARITZ PARRA

Associated Press

MADRID (AP) — Separatist politicians and activists from Catalonia on Tuesday announced a legal offensive in half a dozen countries against the Spanish state and the Israeli owners of a controversial spyware allegedly used to snoop on them.

The head of the Catalan and Spanish-speaking northeastern region also announced that relations with central authorities in Spain would remain strained until Madrid conducts a full investigation and punishes those found responsible for the alleged surveillance.

A spokeswoman for the Spanish government said there was no illegal spying happening in the country.

Citizen Lab, a team of cybersecurity experts affiliated with the University of Toronto, had revealed a day before what is believed to be the largest to date forensically documented cluster of hacking attempts with Pegasus, a program that silently infiltrates phones to harvest their data and potentially spy on their owners.



Former deputy president of the Catalan regional government Oriol Junqueras, centre, walks with the current Catalan president Pere Aragones, 2nd left, in front of an "estelada" or Catalan pro-independence flag after being released from the Lledoners prison in Sant Joan de Vilatorrada near Barcelona, Spain, June 23, 2021.

Associated Press

At least 65 high-profile figures of the Catalan pro-independence camp including elected officials, civil society leaders, lawyers and their relatives were targeted with NSO Group's Pegasus or other programs created by Candiru, another Israeli tech firm.

Candiru's spyware potentially allows third parties to impersonate the phone's owner to send out messages or emails, according to

Citizen Lab. Both NSO Group, the owner of Pegasus, and Candiru have been criticized by global rights groups for breaching users' privacy and face lawsuits from some of the world's major technology firms.

The companies claim that their software is only sold to government agencies to target criminals and terrorists. On the alleged spying on Catalan separatists, Citizen Lab said that its research had found evidence of "a strong nexus with one or more entities within the Spanish government."

Asked whether the country's intelligence services, known as CNI, had contracted the use of Pegasus, Rodríguez said: "There are issues which, because they pertain to national security, are protected by law and are classified material."

Some of the politicians and activists allegedly targeted appeared at the same time for a press conference at the European Parliament in Brussels, where they vowed to file lawsuits seeking transparency in Spain, but also in France, Germany, Switzerland, Belgium and Luxembourg, where some of the alleged hacking took place. Luxembourg is also where the European subsidiary of NSO Group is headquartered. □

U.S. officials heading to Solomons over China pact worries

By NICK PERRY

Associated Press

WELLINGTON, New Zealand

(AP) — The U.S. is sending two top officials to the Solomon Islands following a visit last week by an Australian senator over concerns that China could establish a military presence in the South Pacific island nation.

The White House said Monday that later this week, Kurt Campbell, the National Security Council Indo-Pacific coordinator, and Daniel Kritenbrink, the assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs, will lead a delegation of U.S. government officials to the Solomon Islands, and will also visit Fiji and Papua New Guinea.

In Beijing, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin on Tuesday said Foreign Minister Wang Yi and his Solomon Islands counterpart, Jeremiah

Manele, officially signed a security agreement "the other day." No specific date was given.

A draft of the pact, which was leaked online, said Chinese warships could stop in the Solomon Islands and China could send police and armed forces there "to assist in maintaining social

order."

Wang told reporters at a daily briefing that the agreement covers "maintaining social order," along with protecting lives and property, providing humanitarian assistance and responding to natural disasters. "We are committed to helping the Solomon

Islands to strengthen its capacity building to maintain national security," Wang said. He said the agreement does not seek to supersede the South Pacific nation's security ties with other nations.

The Solomon Islands has sought to downplay the significance of the agreement and says it won't lead to China establishing a military base there, but many neighboring countries and Western nations remain worried.

U.S. State Department spokesman Ned Price said the agreement could destabilize the Solomon Islands and would set a concerning precedent for the wider Pacific region.

"Despite the Solomon Islands government's comments, the broad nature of the security agreement leaves open the door for the deployment of P.R.C.

(People's Republic of China) military forces to the Solomon Islands," Price said.

The U.S. trip comes after a visit to the Solomon Islands last week by Australian Sen. Zed Seselja, the minister for international development and the Pacific.

The Australian government said it was "deeply disappointed" by the Chinese announcement that the deal was signed.

"We are concerned about the lack of transparency with which this agreement has been developed, noting its potential to undermine stability in our region," Seselja and Australian Foreign Minister Marise Payne said in a joint statement.

"We continue to seek further clarity on the terms of the agreement, and its consequences for the Pacific region," the statement added. □



U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Kurt Campbell speaks during a press conference at the U.S. Embassy in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, Thursday, Dec. 13, 2012.

Associated Press

Sri Lanka police open fire at protesters; 1 dead, 13 injured

By KRISHAN FRANCIS and BHARATHA MALLAWARACHI

Associated Press
COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP)

— Sri Lankan police opened fire Tuesday at a group of people protesting new fuel price increases, killing one and injuring 13 others, in the first shooting by security forces during weeks of demonstrations over the country's worst economic crisis in decades.

Fifteen police personnel were also admitted to hospital with minor injuries after clashes with protesters.

Police confirmed that they shot at the protesters in Rambukkana, 90 kilometers (55 miles) northeast of Colombo, the capital. Police spokesman Nihal Taldwawa said the demonstrators were blocking railway tracks and roads and had ignored police warnings to disperse. He said protesters also threw rocks at police. Dr. Mihiri Priyangani of the government hospital in Kegalle said 14 people were brought there with suspected gunshot wounds and one had died. Three others had undergone surgeries and were being monitored.



Members of Sri Lanka's opposition political party National People's Power participate in an anti-government protest rally in Colombo, Sri Lanka, Tuesday, April 19, 2022.

The police in hospital had minor injuries, possibly from being hit by stones, she said. Sri Lanka is on the brink of bankruptcy, with nearly \$7 billion of its total \$25 billion in foreign debt due for repayment this year. A severe shortage of foreign exchange means the country lacks money to buy imported goods.

U.S. Ambassador Julie

Chung and U.N. Resident Coordinator Hanaa Singer-Hamdy urged restraint from all sides and called on the authorities to ensure the people's right to peaceful protest.

Chung called for an independent investigation into the shooting.

Police declared local curfew in Rambukkana after the incident.

People have endured months of shortages of essentials such as food, cooking gas, fuel and medicine, lining up for hours to buy the very limited stocks available.

Fuel prices have risen several times in recent months, resulting in sharp increases in transport costs and prices of other essentials. There was another round of in-

creases at midnight Monday.

Thousands of protesters continued to occupy the entrance to the president's office for an 11th day Tuesday, blaming him for the economic crisis.

Sri Lanka's prime minister said Tuesday that the constitution will be changed to clip presidential powers and empower Parliament, as protesters continued to demand that the president and his powerful family quit. Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa told Parliament that the power shift is a quick step that can be taken to politically stabilize the country and help talks with the International Monetary Fund over an economic recovery plan.

President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, the prime minister's brother, concentrated power in the presidency after being elected in 2019. "While looking for solutions to the economic problems, it is important that we have political and social stability in the country," Prime Minister Rajapaksa said, adding that restoring more power to Parliament will be a start to the reforms. □

South Africa launches relief for Durban flooding; 448 dead

By MOGOMOTSI MAGOME
Associated Press

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — Declaring a national state of disaster, South Africa has allocated \$67 million to help those hit by floods that have

killed at least 448 people in the eastern city of Durban and the surrounding Kwa-Zulu-Natal province.

Nearly 4,000 homes have been destroyed and more than 40,000 people dis-

placed by the floods and mudslides caused by prolonged heavy rains, provincial officials said Tuesday. More than 40 people remain missing and about 600 schools have been hit with damages estimated at about \$28 million, according to officials.

South Africa's military has deployed 10,000 troops in Operation Chariot to help with continuing search and rescue efforts, deliver food, water, and clothing to flood victims, and rebuild collapsed roads and bridges. Water tankers have been sent to areas where access to clean water has been disrupted and teams are working to restore electricity to large areas.

Students shoveled mud out of some schools that had been flooded.

Visiting some of the flooded areas last week, South African President Cyril Ramaphosa blamed climate change for the unprecedented rains, the heaviest in at least 60 years.

Announcing the state of disaster in a televised address Monday night, Ramaphosa pledged that government funds for the flood victims will not be lost to corruption. "There can be no room for corruption, mismanagement or fraud of any sort," said Ramaphosa.

"Learning from the experience of the COVID-19 pandemic, we are drawing together various stakeholders to be part of an oversight structure to ensure all funds disbursed to respond to this disaster are properly accounted for and that the state receives value for

money," he said. Ramaphosa's remarks come after widespread graft was uncovered by the state's Special Investigating Unit in state funds that were supposed to help the nation respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Former Health Minister Zweli Mkhize resigned after the investigation found that businesses linked to his family benefited from inflated COVID-19 contracts from his department.

Despite Ramaphosa's pledge, many South Africans are skeptical that government funds for flood relief will not be diverted by corruption.

Several businesses, prominent South Africans and charities have pledged money to private organizations. □



Shipping containers are strewn beside the N2 Highway in Durban, South Africa, Wednesday, April 13, 2022.

Associated Press



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Israeli settlers march in West Bank amid wave of unrest

By NASSER NASSER and
ILAN BEN ZION

Associated Press

BURQA, West Bank (AP)

— Thousands of Israelis marched to a dismantled settlement deep in the occupied West Bank on Tuesday and called for it to be rebuilt in a show of strength amid a wave of Israeli-Palestinian unrest and fears of further escalation.

The army blocked roads to facilitate the march led by hard-line Jewish settlers and prevent Palestinians from reaching the area. Dozens of Palestinian residents protested the closures. Clashes broke out, with Israeli soldiers firing rubber bullets and tear gas at Palestinian youths hurling stones and burning tires.

Palestinian medics said



A Palestinian protester uses a slingshot during clashes with Israeli border police in the West Bank village of Burqa, north of Nablus, Tuesday, April 19, 2022.

they treated at least eight Palestinians who were struck by rubber bullets or tear gas canisters fired by Israeli troops in the adjacent

West Bank village of Burqa. Israelis have repeatedly returned to Homesh, a hilltop settlement that emerged as a symbol of settler defi-

weeks after a series of deadly attacks inside Israel and military operations in the West Bank. Palestinian militants fired a rocket from the Gaza Strip into southern Israel for the first time in months, and Israel carried out airstrikes, after days of clashes between Israeli police and Palestinians at a flashpoint holy site in Jerusalem.

The unrest has raised fears of a repeat of last year, when protests and clashes in Jerusalem helped ignite an 11-day Gaza war.

The shrine, known to Muslims as the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound and to Jews as the Temple Mount, is the emotional epicenter of the decades-long Israeli-Palestinian conflict. □

Cuba says it will attend migration talks with the US

The Associated Press

HAVANA (AP) — Cuban authorities said Tuesday that migration talks with the United States will take place this week, the first in four years since the hardening of relations between

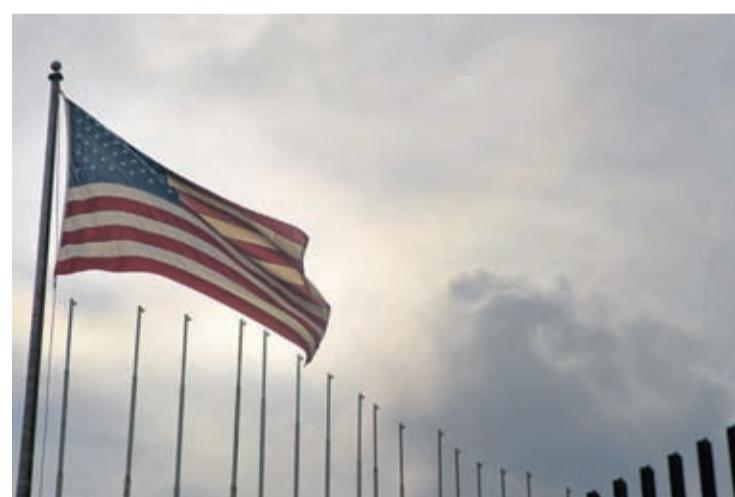
both countries and amid a sustained increase in arrivals of Cuban citizens at the southern border of the U.S. Cuba's Foreign Ministry said on Twitter that the meeting will be held in Washington on Thursday and that its

delegation will be headed by Deputy Minister Carlos Fernández de Cossio.

The last of these meetings which according to agreements between both countries must be held twice a year took place in July 2018, under the administration of then President Donald Trump.

Trump ended the policy of rapprochement between both nations that his predecessor Barack Obama had begun.

Trump increased sanctions against the Caribbean island, from the cancellation of permits to send remittances or cruise ships, to penalties for companies from third countries that operate in Cuba, to limitation of flights and punishment of oil tankers bound for Cuba. □



U.S. flag flies at the U.S. embassy in Havana, Cuba, March 18, 2019, days after the U.S. State Department announced it was eliminating a five-year tourist visa for Cubans.

Associated Press

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Centro pa Hoben y Famia is an organization that consists of different instances in the preventive area that brings information, guide and support to young people, parents and the whole community on different topics that relate to the community, like the upbringing of a kid, child abuse, drugs and alcohol,

mental health, etc.

One of the center's goals is to reach their desired audience.

On Wednesday, the 13th of April they visited Costa Linda Beach Resort. The hotel opened its doors and received them with 2 educational conferences on

Centro pa Hoben y Famia organizes a conference at Costa Linda Beach Resort

the topics of Mental Health and Depression. These conferences were given by Fundacion Anti Drogen Aruba (Anti Drugs Foundation Aruba). Along with other foundations that also form a part of this center, who had booths to give information about their services like Tienda di Educacion, Fundacion Respeta Mi, Fundacion pa Nos Muchanan, Centro pa Hoben y Famia and guest foundation Sozial Psychiatrische Dienst (social psychiatric help). A total of 120 employees participated on this day.

Centro pa Hoben y Famia is thankful to the management team and human resources team of Costa



Linda Beach Resort for the opportunity to all their employees so they could attend both conferences and visit the exposition to receive more information and ask any questions they may have had.

Centro pa Hoben y Famia hopes to receive the cooperation of many more organizations, companies and hotel sector to continue to bring these interesting and educational topics to the workforce. □

Leatherback Sea Turtle comes ashore to lay eggs



It happened on Good Friday Night.

A Leatherback Sea Turtle, Aruba's iconic Driekiel came ashore at Hacienda, during a swinging party at Moomba Beach Bar. The Police was alerted and arrived in minutes.

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ing ritual. Party people and beach visitors enjoyed the unique spectacle at a respectful distance.

After nesting the turtle returned to the sea. Turtugabu placed the usual protection.

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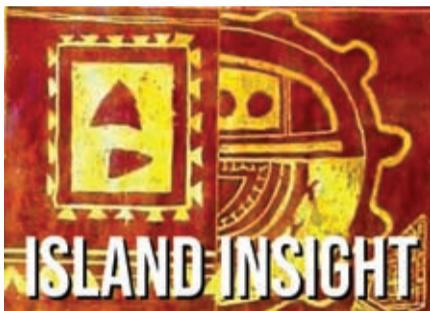
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Article by Etnia Nativa

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The Tamarind

Our goal at Etnia Nativa is to create cultural awareness, promote education and safeguard our heritage by guiding our readers to become the next and new guardians of the island. In this episode we would like to raise awareness regarding this wonder tree called the Tamarind, *Tamarindus indica*.

A tree that we can find in many gardens on our island and from which we like to enjoy not only the deliciousness of its fruit but also the number of benefits it has for our health. Well in this episode we are going to share some details with you.. The tamarind tree is native to the island of Madagascar in Africa, however today you will find it everywhere. For example in its adaptation to tropical areas of India, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean isles has been a total success. This tree produces bean-like pods which contain seeds surrounded whit pulp, held together by fiber sting. As these pods ripen, the pulp becomes paste-like and takes on a sweet-citric sour taste. It was the Dutch who brought its seeds to Aruba and around the world as medicine to mitigate scurvy during their long maritime voyages. Since processed Tamarind comes in so many forms and is consumed in countless ways, We will walk you through its wide usage and excellent health benefits and as ingredient in the cuisine of Aruba and different parts of the world. From boosting your immunity to keeping your liver and heart safe from diseases, tamarind does your health a world of good. Helps in weight loss, with digestion and also effective in managing diabetes, aids a healthy heart and takes care of your liver and as if this were not enough it can help you deal with allergies.

Tamarind is rich in fiber and has no fat content. Studies suggest that eating tamarind daily might actually help in weight reduction since it contains flavonoids and polyphenols. The Tamarind is also loaded with hydroxy-citric acid, which reduces your appetite by inhibiting amylase, an enzyme responsible for converting carbohydrate into fat. Tamarind has been used since ancient times as a laxative because of its acids and potassium content. Its ability to relax abdominal muscles is why

it is also used as a remedy for diarrhea. So, while the fruit is used to relieve constipation, the leaves provide treatment from diarrhea, and the root and bark can be consumed to alleviate abdominal pain, while the leaves can be boiled in an anti-flu tea. It is believed that the Tamarind seed extracts contains qualities which offer great defense against diabetes, since in addition of being anti-inflammatory, it can stabilize blood sugar levels and reverse pancreatic tissue damage due to the alpha-amylase enzyme found in it that reduces blood sugar levels.

Tamarind is a very heart-friendly fruit, has high potassium content which can help keep your blood pressure in check. Flavonoids present in tamarind lowers "bad" cholesterol and raise "good" cholesterol levels, thus preventing the build-up of triglycerides that are a type of fat in the blood. It turns out that tamarind can take care of your liver as well.

A diet rich in calories leads to a fatty liver and studies suggest that daily consumption of tamarind extracts can also reverse this condition. At the beginning of our episode we also told you that tamarind can help with allergies, control asthma and with coughs due to its anti-histamine properties, it has a high percentage of vitamin C and can stimulate the immune system to prevent colds and coughs.

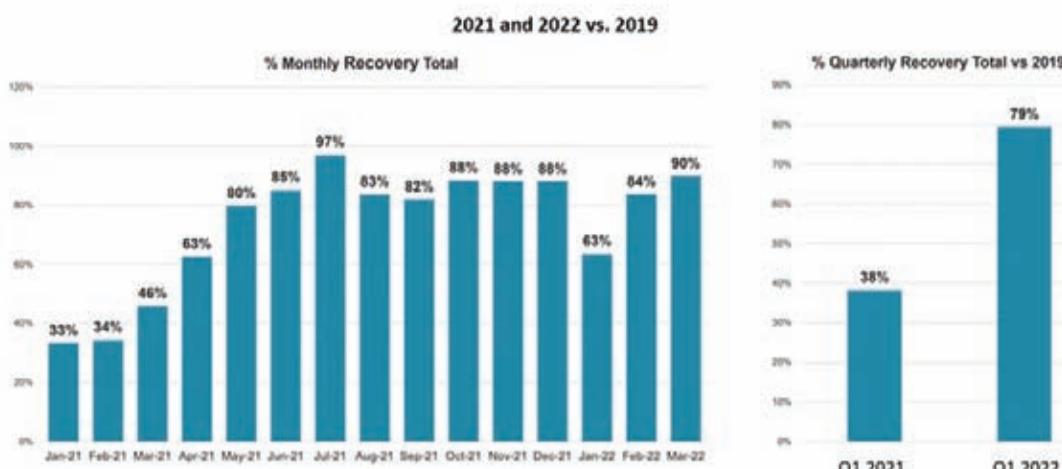
Do you have planned to learn about Aruba its origins and cultural heritage all by a full blood Aruban? We recommend you to be part of the exclusive visitors at this cozy museum-home called "Etnia Nativa". Native art, archaeological artifacts and colonial furniture, while the facility itself is the result of transforming recycled materials in to structure. □

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The office of Tourism, A.T.A informs that in March our destination received a total of 95,912 visitors "stay-over". Compared with March of 2019, which was the last normal year for tourism, one can see that Aruba has recovered 90% of the amount of visitors received in March 2019.

The 3 markets that shined the most in the amount of tourists that visited in March of 2022 as well as the rate

of recovery is United States with 78,358 visitors who represent a 94% recovery compared to March of 2019, The Netherlands with 4,229 visitors which represents a 119% recovery compared to March of 2019, and lastly Colombia with 1,932 visitors which represents a 91% recovery in comparison to March 2019.

2022 started with a growth that was stronger and more stable than 2021, even

though in January we saw the recovery fall in comparison to the last 8 months of 2021. However, the recovery in February and March was extremely positive. If you compare March 2022 to March 2021, you can see a growth of 95.9% in the amount of stay-over visitors, which went from 48,967 to 95,912.

If you compare March 2022 with March of 2021, you can see once again that

In March of 2022 Aruba reached a recovery of 90% in comparison to March 2019

the 3 markets that grew the most in regards to the amount of stay-over visitors is United States with 34,979 representing a growth of 80.6%, The Netherlands with 2,649 representing a growth of 167.7% and Colombia with 725, representing a growth of 60.1%.

North America remains the strongest market in Aruba and in March of 2022 a total of 82,436 visitors from North America came to Aruba. This is about 85.9% of the stayover visitors. Europe was responsible for 6.5 percent of the total visitors in Aruba, Latin America responsible for 5.2 percent,

leaving a 2.3 percent of visitors from other parts of the world.

According to Central Bank of Aruba the so called 'Tourism Credits' (formerly known as "Tourism Receipts" for the first, second and 3 quarter of 2021, there was a contribution of 2,120.10 million Aruban Florins in our economy, with a growth of 48% compared to the same season in 2020. This is naturally owed to the fact that the global pandemic of COVID-19, during which Aruba also had to close its borders temporarily between mid March 2020 to end of July 2020.□

Urgent Care vs. Emergency Room: Where should you go?

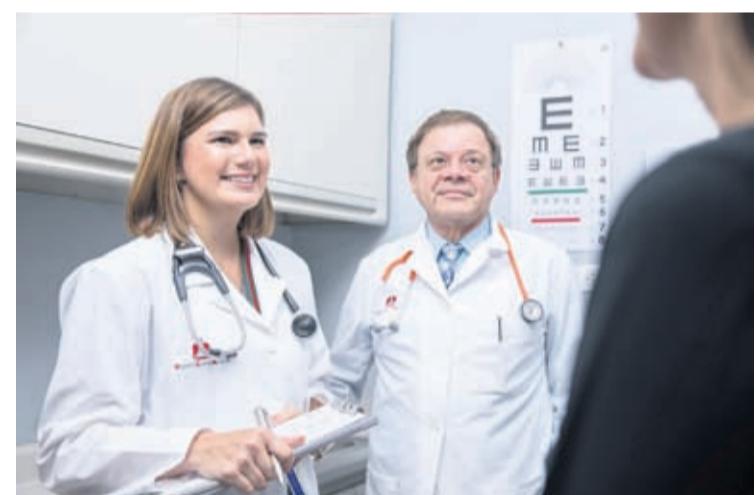
Imagine yourself arriving on the beautiful island of Aruba. You've scheduled your days with exciting activities or to relax by the beach or pool. Of course, the least you would expect is to get sick or become in need of medical assistance. Because honestly, who does that while on vacation?

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step is to assess your medical need and its urgency. At Urgent Care Aruba, we offer medical assistance for non-life-threatening illnesses and injuries. We accept walk-ins from Monday to Friday from 8 am to 8 pm, Saturday from 8 am to 4 pm, Sunday/Holiday from 10 am to 2 pm. Therefore, receive a better cost value than the Emergency Room as the alternative option.

Other services offered at the Urgent Care Aruba is X-Ray (Without Appointment), Ultrasound (With Appointment), and Gynecology Services (With Appointment).

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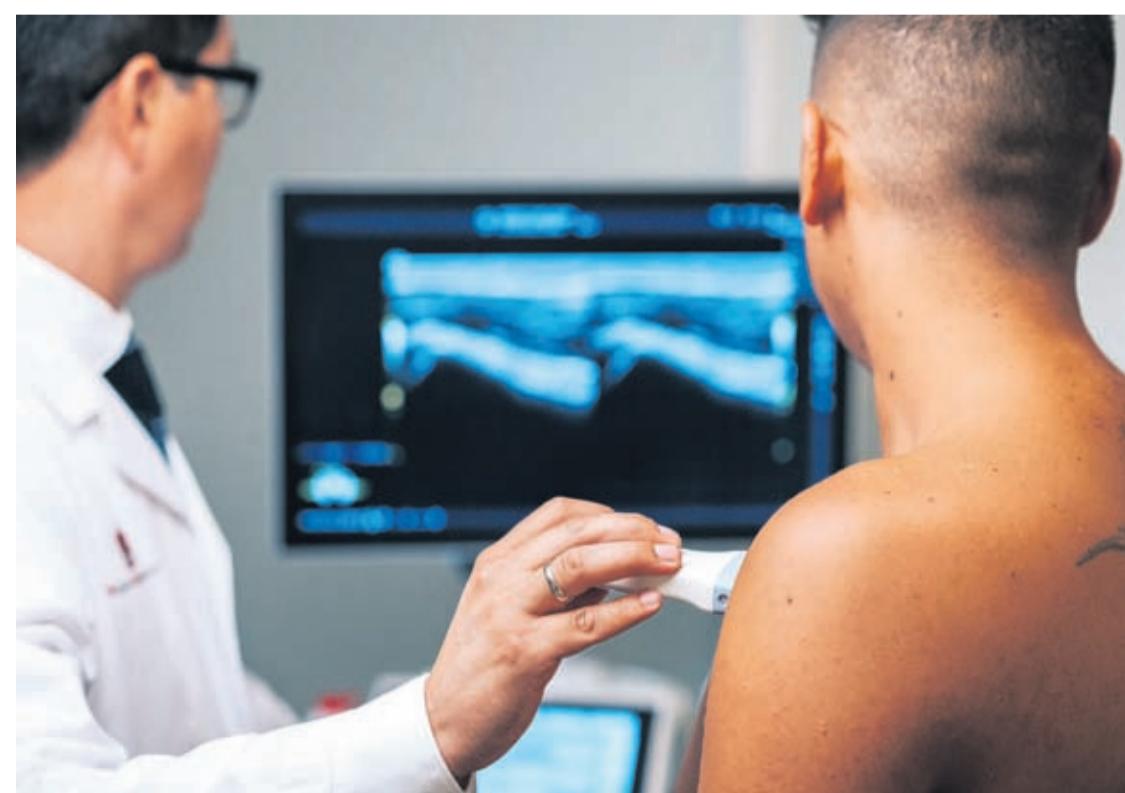


Our mission is to have you back on your vacation; that is why we offer quick, reliable, and efficient medical service. Please view our comparison information chart: Urgent Care vs. Emergency Room.

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**Urgent
Care
Aruba**



Millennial Money: Skipped college in 2021? Enroll this fall

By COLIN BERESFORD
of NerdWallet

The pandemic upended what it meant to be a college student as newfound barriers to learning cropped up in spring 2020: In-person classes were forced online, family obligations became more pronounced and economic difficulties spread.

"All of these factors just came together to create this perfect storm," says Mamie Voight, president and CEO of the Institute for Higher Education Policy, a nonprofit focused on college access. She says that students from low-income backgrounds and those with responsibilities outside of school — like jobs and kids — faced the steepest challenges.

There were 5.1% fewer students enrolled in fall 2021 than fall 2019, according to estimates from the Na-

tional Student Clearinghouse Research Center. And between fall 2019 and fall 2020, the percentage of students who reenrolled fell the most since 2009.

Yet, it may be time to return, especially if you had to sit out any of the last two years. A strong job market and earnings increases for low-wage workers can, at face value, make higher education less appealing. But the long-term picture remains clear.

Those with no college education see median lifetime earnings of \$1.6 million, according to the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce. That's \$1.2 million less than the \$2.8 million of median lifetime earnings for those with a bachelor's degree. The median associate degree holder sees lifetime earnings of \$2 million.

"For students, the answer is

pretty clear that going to college is a better choice economically, than not going," says Voight. "And reenrolling, if you stopped out ... will make a world of a difference in terms of job opportunities and wage growth over a person's lifetime." The longer you wait to go back, the less likely you are to attain a degree, according to the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center. And for those who have delayed going to college, it comes with a cost: The Federal Reserve Bank of New York estimates that postponing college for a year results in a potential \$90,000 loss in lifetime earnings.

Although the difficulties of the pandemic haven't disappeared, colleges have become better equipped to help students overcome barriers.

COLLEGES HAVE ADAPTED



Students walk to and from classes on the Indiana University campus, Thursday, Oct. 14, 2021, in Bloomington, Ind.

Associated Press

TO NEW EXPECTATIONS — AND NEEDS

Students have returned to campuses, but many colleges are keeping the changes they've made. Community and four-year colleges have adjusted to better reach students, says Matt Bergman, an associate professor of organizational leadership at the University of Louisville.

"We have so many opportunities for students to come back in ways that they wouldn't have been able to as recent as five years (ago)," adds Bergman, who studies adult learning and degree completion. Course offerings have become more flexible, with in-person and virtual classes and also hybrid formats, Bergman says. They're also becoming available in synchronous (learning with a class) and asynchronous formats (learning at your own pace).

Community colleges made many changes to meet the needs of their students, according to Martha Parham, the senior vice president of public relations for the American Association of Community Colleges. These lasting transformations can make it easier for students to return to school. "I do think the pandemic has changed the landscape in the course offerings and that change is going to stick," Parham says. "So that looks different in different places, in different students, in different colleges, but a lot of services and programs were put into place to ensure student success at every

level."

SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS IS OUT THERE

This fall, college students have more federal financial support available than in years past. The annual maximum Pell Grant, aid you don't have to repay, has increased \$400 to \$6,895 for the coming academic year. Pell Grant eligibility is determined by your financial situation and the cost of attendance at the institution you're considering. To be eligible, you need to submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, also known as the FAFSA. Many colleges also have more financial resources available than in years past, thanks to \$76.3 billion in federal pandemic assistance funds provided to institutions across the nation.

"Right now, in particular, is a great time to go to community colleges because they have a lot of resources that are directly available to students," says Parham, including funding for tuition and books, transportation, food and housing assistance, and technology. If you need child care, pick the school that offers it, Bergman says. If you have work experience, look for colleges that offer prior learning assessments, giving you college credit for the skills you've gained.

The important thing is to pick a school that best fits your needs, Bergman adds. Finding the right school can be as easy as visiting a school's website or calling the admissions office to ask about the resources they offer. □

Justices reject states' appeal over cap on tax deductibility



Visitors walk outside the Supreme Court building on Capitol Hill in Washington, Feb. 21, 2022.
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court on Monday rejected a challenge from New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and Maryland to the 2017 tax law that capped federal tax deductions for state and local taxes.

The lawsuit had previously been dismissed by lower courts. It argued that the Republican-led tax law, signed by then-President Donald Trump, unfairly singled out high-tax states in which

Democrats predominate. The law caps a deduction for state and local taxes, known as SALT, at \$10,000. The lawsuit claimed that lawmakers crafted the provision to target Democratic states, interfering with the states' constitutionally granted taxing authority. Legislation to raise the cap has passed the House of Representatives but not the Senate. □

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 39 Exploding

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10 Extreme 41 Dance
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11 Like new 42 Intended
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12 Enticed

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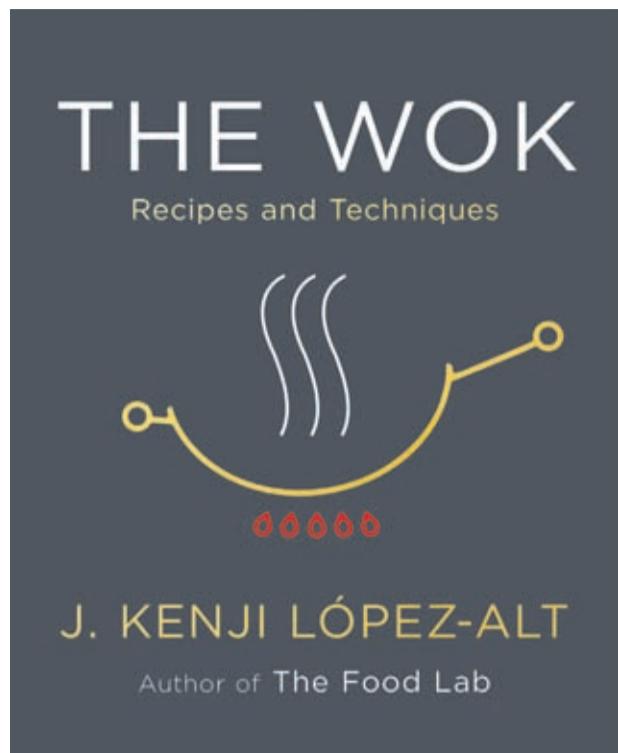
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J. Kenji López-Alt wants you to be a wok star in the kitchen



This cover image released by W. W. Norton & Company shows "The Wok: Recipes and Techniques" by J. Kenji López-Alt.

Associated Press

By MARK KENNEDY

AP Entertainment Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Chef and food writer J. Kenji López-Alt suspects there's something in your kitchen that you're not using near enough — the wok. The Asian deep-bottomed pot is his versatile go-to cooking tool for everything from Korean-style pancakes to bacon and egg fried rice. "Obviously people know them for stir fries," he says. "But they're also great for simmering, great for braising, great for steaming. I think they're the best tool for both steaming and deep frying. You can make rice. There's just a huge, huge amount of stuff you can do in this one pan."

After spending much of the pandemic tinkering, López-Alt is offering his wisdom in "The Wok: Recipes and Techniques" from W.W. Norton & Company, a book with handy tips, fascinating

asides and some 200 dishes.

"I think there's only one recipe that calls for even turning on the oven. Everything else is just 100% done in one pan on your stovetop," he says.

"The Wok" gives advice on the best oils to use, how to boil eggs, and how to approach stews and curries. It knocks down some myths, like the one that says only day-old rice makes good fried rice. There's even a section on making soups in a wok, including egg drop, wonton, and hot and sour.

López-Alt advises home chefs to get what he has — a 14-inch, flat-bottomed, carbon-steel wok, and says if you pay more than \$50, you're probably being overcharged. He bought his at a Target in the early 2000s.

That wok has adapted to each stage in his life. He bought it as a college student living with roommates, kept using it after moving in with his soon-to-be wife, and continues to cook with it now as a father. He says he pulls out the wok three or four times a week.

López-Alt is also the author of "The Food Lab: Better Homecooking Through Science," a textbook-like cookbook with roots in scientific reason. The new book has similar rigorous testing, with fantastic detours into when to rinse rice, whether to use MSG, how to shop for shrimp and how different types of noodles behave.

"I find learning things is a lot easier when I learn the underlying principles behind them. And so I learned why I'm doing something as well as how," he said.

López-Alt compares following recipes in a cookbook to asking directions on your phone from Siri — you get from point A to point B, but learn nothing about the neighborhoods or how they connect.

"I think knowing techniques and science is what sort of gives me the confidence to stray from recipes and know that I'm still not going to get lost and (will) end up with something edible and hopefully delicious," he says.

His new book has the blessing of Grace Young, a fierce advocate of the wok, who has writ-

ten the award-winning books "The Breath of a Wok" and "Stir Frying to the Sky's Edge." She welcomes wok-loving reinforcements, worried that the pot is at a crossroads, especially with the rise of nonstick, inauthentic versions.

"I'm really grateful to Kenji for writing this book because he can appeal to a much broader and younger audience than I can reach," she says. "It means more woks get homes, more people are curious, and more people are appreciative of the fact that this pan is so special and so unique." The wok's flared shape gives chefs a better angle to manipulate food than vertical walls on traditional pots, and it also reduces splatter. Its sides can be used to either protect food from the heat at the center or alternatively be a place that really heats up and provides a sizzle.

López-Alt had written in the kitchen-equipment chapter of "The Food Lab" that the wok was his go-to pan, but the final book never had recipes or advice because that section was edited out for space. So when he started to tackle a second volume of "The Food Lab," he started by revisiting the wok chapter and began expanding it. Then it took on a life of its own.

"I was like 200 pages in and I wasn't done with stir-fries. So it felt like, 'Hey, this is something I'm passionate about and I've found useful in my life, so maybe I should write a whole book and then other people will also find it useful,'" he says.

He dispels some false impressions of wok cooking: It's not true, he says, that you need jet flame, high-powered restaurant-style burners to cook properly with a wok.

"I go to Peter Luger's in New York, right? And they have a steak that they cook under a 1,600-degree broiler. And it's like a certain experience, right? I'm not expecting to be able to go home and cook the steak the exact same way," he says.

"That's just like a very particular restaurant style of cooking a steak. But that doesn't mean there aren't many other ways I can cook steak at home that are delicious." □

Actor Ezra Miller arrested again on Hawaii's Big Island

By JENNIFER SINCO KELLEHER

Associated Press

HONOLULU (AP) — Ezra Miller was arrested on suspicion of assault Tuesday, the second time the actor known for playing the Flash in "Justice League" films has been arrested in Hawaii in recent weeks.

Miller became irate after being asked to leave a get together a Big Island home and threw a chair, hitting a woman in the forehead, said a news release from the Hawaii Police Department.

The woman was treated for

a half-inch cut on her forehead, police said.

Miller, described by police as a 29-year-old visitor from Vermont, was arrested during a traffic stop and released pending further investigation.

It's unclear how Miller's arrest affects an arraignment scheduled for later Tuesday for the actor's arrest last month at a Big Island karaoke bar. Miller was charged with harassment and disorderly conduct after police said the actor grabbed a mic from a singing woman and lunged at a man playing darts.

Miller was aggravated by a rendition of the Lady Gaga and Bradley Cooper ballad "Shallow," Hawaii Police Assistant Chief Kenneth Quiocho said.

Miller is also scheduled to be arraigned Tuesday in a separate traffic case. Police were called to a dispute in downtown Hilo last month where Miller was uncooperative, refused to leave the area and obstructed a sidewalk, Quiocho said.

Miller's attorney didn't immediately return a message seeking comment on the latest arrest.



Actor Ezra Miller poses for photographers upon arrival at the premiere of the film "Fantastic Beasts: The Crimes of Grindelwald," at a central London cinema, Tuesday, Nov. 13, 2018.

Associated Press

Attorney Francis Alcain had requested Tuesday's court hearing, previously scheduled for next week, be moved up.

Alcain said in a court filing

his client "has various time sensitive work obligations in California and/or New York," and needs an earlier hearing "to resolve this matter." □

Padres 1st MLB team to reach uniform ad deal, with Motorola

By RONALD BLUM
AP Baseball Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — There will be a new pitch on Major League Baseball fields next season.

The San Diego Padres became the first team to announce a deal for ads on their uniforms, saying Tuesday that patches with a Motorola logo will be worn on the sleeves of their jerseys.

The March 10 memorandum of understanding for a new collective bargaining agreement between MLB and the players' association gave the 30 teams the right to sell patch ads on uniforms and sticker ads on helmets. The sides adopted an Aug. 6, 2021, proposal by MLB to amend a section of the Official Baseball Rules which states: "No part of the uniform shall include patches or designs relating to commercial advertisement."

MLB's proposal read: "Notwithstanding the foregoing or anything else in these rules, a club may license to third-party commercial sponsors the right to place their name, logos and/or marks on the uniform, provided that the patch or design is approved in advance by the Office of the Commissioner after consul-



This photo provided by the San Diego Padres shows Padres third baseman Manny Machado gesturing towards the Motorola patch on his jersey in Peoria, Ariz., March 18, 2022.

Associated Press

tation with the players' association."

MLB decided to launch the uniform ads with the 2023 season and says it may start the helmet ads with this year's postseason.

The Padres will have the ads on the right sleeves of left-handed hitters and pitchers, and the left sleeves of righties — so as to face cameras more often.

"Motorola's iconic logo on our jersey is a perfect alignment with our Padres brand," Padres CEO Erik Greupner said in a state-

ment Tuesday.

MLB and the union agreed that player commercial deals in place as of the start of the 2022 season cannot be challenged by the league or its teams.

Baseball has had ads in the past for special events. For the opening series in Tokyo, the New York Mets and Chicago Cubs wore sleeve patches in 2000 for the insurance company AllU and helmet decals for the am/pm convenience store chain, according to univision.com. The New York

Yankees and Tampa Bay Rays had sleeve ads and helmet decals for the Japanese electronics company Ricoh in 2004; the Oakland Athletics had Pepsi ads on their sleeves and the Boston Red Sox EMC in 2008, when Ricoh was on both teams' helmets; the Seattle Mariners had Boeing on sleeves and Oakland Athletics had the social app company Goops in 2012, when Goops was on both sleeves; and Oakland had MGM Resorts on sleeves and Seattle had the pe-

roleum company Eneos in 2019, when there were no helmet ads.

Eintracht Braunschweig, then in the Bundesliga, became the first German club with advertising in March 1973 under an agreement with Jägermeister.

Jersey ads in Britain's professional leagues started with Scotland's Hibernian during the 1977-78 season and Buxton, a sportswear company, and extended to English League fields when Liverpool reached an agreement with Hitachi ahead of the 1979-80 season.

Juventus began shirt advertising in Serie A under a deal with Ariston in 1979, and Real Madrid started in Spain's La Liga with Zanussi in 1982, according to footballpink.net.

Major League Soccer became the first of the major North American leagues to allow jersey ads in 2007. Real Salt Lake was the first to announce a deal, with the dietary supplement juice company XanGo.

Among other North American leagues, the NBA started selling sponsorship logos for the 2017-18 season. The NHL launched helmet ads for the 2020-21 season and began jersey advertising this season. □

Deshawn Watson reports to Browns for first offseason program

By TOM WITHERS
AP Sports Writer

CLEVELAND (AP) — Deshaun Watson walked through snow on the way to his first day of work with the Browns. Baker Mayfield was nowhere in sight.

Watson reported to Cleveland's offseason program Tuesday to restart his career with the Browns, who mortgaged their short-term future by acquiring the controversial quarterback accused of sexual misconduct in a trade last month. With temperatures in the 30s and late-spring snow falling, the former Houston QB arrived at the team's facility in Berea, Ohio. The Browns posted a photo on

Twitter of Watson, wearing a heavy winter jacket, before he entered the building. One of the reasons the three-time Pro Bowler and Georgia native, who played at Clemson in South Carolina, initially turned down the Browns in their pursuit before changing his mind was because of Northeast Ohio's frigid, wintry weather.

The Browns convinced Watson to join him and then traded three first-round draft picks and six selections overall in March to Houston for the 26-year-old, who faces 22 civil lawsuits from women accusing him of sexual misconduct during massage therapy

sessions. Browns coach Kevin Stefanski is scheduled to meet with reporters Wednesday. Watson is not expected to take any reporter's questions.

Watson also faces discipline from the NFL, which is investigating whether he violated the league's personal-conduct policy. It's possible he'll be suspended for part of the 2022 season. The three-time Pro Bowl QB has professed his innocence. Two grand juries in Texas have declined to indict him on any criminal charges. However, Watson is still dealing with the civil lawsuits and has been giving depositions in recent weeks.



Cleveland Browns general manager Andrew Berry, left, new quarterback Deshaun Watson, center, and head coach Kevin Stefanski pose for a photo during a news conference at the NFL football team's training facility, Friday, March 25, 2022, in Berea, Ohio.

Associated Press

The Browns did their own background check on Watson, and owners Dee and Jimmy Haslam felt so confident in the research — and after personally meet-

ing with Watson — that they signed him to a fully guaranteed \$230 million contract after he waived his no-trade clause to come to Cleveland. □

Jordan Spieth crossing \$50M a reminder of Tiger's standard

By DOUG FERGUSON

AP Golf Writer

Not even inflation can diminish the dominance of Tiger Woods.

The latest reminder came at Hilton Head when Jordan Spieth overcame an 18-inch miss on Saturday and a three-shot deficit on Sunday to beat Patrick Cantlay in a playoff for his 13th career PGA Tour victory.

Along with a tartan jacket (he looks better in green) and a spot in the winners-only field at Kapalua next January (a big perk to him), Spieth earned \$1,440,000. That made him the 11th player in PGA Tour history to cross the \$50 million mark in career earnings.

Officially, he is the youngest player at 28 years and 9 months to reach \$50 million.

That's where inflation comes in.

Woods is the only other player to reach \$50 million in career tour earnings before turning 30. He was 29 and 6 months when he was runner-up at the Western Open in 2005, pushing him over a milestone that he quickly left in the rearview mirror.

Woods needed only seven more years to cross \$100 million, and now he is at \$120,895,206.

Spieth was among a half-dozen players who inconspicuously leaned over



Jordan Spieth holds the championship trophy after winning a one-hole playoff at the RBC Heritage golf tournament, Sunday, April 17, 2022, in Hilton Head Island, S.C.

Associated Press

the railing from the second floor of PGA Tour headquarters last month to watch as Woods was inducted into the World Golf Hall of Fame. He would be quick to acknowledge that a number like \$50 million wouldn't even exist without Woods.

Yes, there was a significant difference in purses.

Total prize money when Woods turned pro in the summer of 1996 was \$65.95 million. Spieth turned pro in 2013 — like Woods, without a tour card — and the total prize fund was \$260 million. While both reached \$50 million in roughly nine

years, Woods did it in 41 fewer tournaments (177 compared with 218 for Spieth). The average total prize money for Woods during that stretch was \$173.8 million. For Spieth, it was \$322.56 million.

Rory McIlroy is a better comparison. He turned pro nearly six years before Spieth and has kept a global schedule with membership on two tours. McIlroy needed only 173 events on the PGA Tour to reach \$50 million at Bay Hill in 2020, about six weeks before he turned 31.

Scores are coming down and prize money is going

up. Such is the evolution of sport. The best measure will always be victories.

Woods has 82 on the PGA Tour alone — 11 more on tours in Asia, Australia, Japan and Europe — and 15 majors. Those are the numbers that define him. When he passed \$50 million, Woods already had 43 tour victories.

Money still matters, though not entirely to Woods. He was asked at Riviera a few months ago if he knew how much was in his deferred compensation package.

"Nope. Uh-uh," he said. Does he want to know? "Uh-uh," he said.

Still, this can be added to his long list of feats that might never be matched, right up there with 142 consecutive cuts and needing only seven starts to qualify for the Tour Championship. Woods has been atop the PGA Tour career money list for 22 years. Love stayed on top all of two weeks until Woods was runner-up at Torrey Pines and took over. It took 73 tournaments from his "Hello, world" introduction to Woods leading the career money list, and the gap has only widened.

Spieth is not ready to declare himself all the way back — "close but far" is what he said after he won the RBC Heritage. He has two wins in just over a year, but also seven finishes out of the top 25 since winning the Texas Open last year and three missed cuts this year. He will always be compared with how he started his career.

It was at the Valspar Championship in 2015 when Spieth, then 21 and in his third year, played a practice round with three others born the same year — Justin Thomas, Daniel Berger and Ollie Schniederjans. They lined up for a group photo from oldest to youngest, sharing birthdates to make sure they got it right. Spieth was the youngest.

This was one week after he passed \$9 million in career money. □



Ash Barty of Australia poses with the Daphne Akhurst Memorial Cup at a park, the morning after defeating Danielle Collins of the U.S. in the women's singles final at the Australian Open tennis championships in Melbourne on Jan. 30, 2022.

Associated Press

BRISBANE, Australia (AP) — Ash Barty has signed on to play in an international golf

exhibition just weeks after retiring from tennis while ranked No. 1 in the world.

Barty swings back into action, trades tennis for golf

The 25-year-old Australian has been included in Ernie Els' Rest of the World team for the Icons Series event at Liberty National Golf Club in Jersey City, New Jersey, on June 30 and July 1. Barty decided to quit tennis last month. She won the Australian Open in January for her third Grand Slam singles championship after titles at Wimbledon last year and the French Open in 2019. She has reportedly lowered her golf handicap to 4 and is

continuing a versatile approach to sports, which included her briefly pursuing a professional cricket career in 2015 during a nearly two-year sabbatical from tennis.

Icon Series organizers said Barty will be joined by the likes of Pep Guardiola and Harry Kane in the 10-hole team match play competition against Fred Couples' U.S. team, which includes Michael Phelps, Oscar De La Hoya and Ben Roethlisberger.

Barty, who is engaged to Garry Kissick, a trainee golf professional in Australia, recently won the ladies' competition at her home club Brookwater, near Brisbane. Karrie Webb, who has 41 wins on the LPGA Tour, played a round with Barty in 2019 and said the tennis star had the talent to play golf at a high level. "I could tell if she puts some time into it she will be a great player," Webb told the Australian Associated Press. □